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Illegal Israeli actions in Occupied East Jerusalem and the rest of the Occupied Palestinian Territory

Security Council
Seventieth year

Identical letters dated 29 October 2015 from the Permanent Observer of the State of Palestine to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General, the President of the General Assembly and the President of the Security Council

I write to once again urgently draw the international community's attention to the grave situation in Occupied Palestine, including East Jerusalem, owing to Israel's ongoing aggression against the Palestinian people. This aggression continues to fuel the cycle of violence and the situation on the ground continues to deteriorate on all fronts. Moreover, it has become overwhelmingly clear that Israeli aggression, including extrajudicial killing, is in particular targeting Palestinian children and youth, who have been suffering casualties at an alarming rate, and whose despair is only deepening in the face of the brutality of this illegal occupation.

Despite recent diplomatic efforts, the current situation remains one of pervasive human insecurity, in which the lives, safety and well-being of the Palestinian civilian population are being gravely threatened by the occupying Power and its extremist settlers. It is Palestinian civilians, including children, who continue to be killed, injured and terrorized by Israel, the occupying Power, on a daily basis, and who remain in dire need of protection.

Again, we must place on record the long list of crimes committed by Israel, the occupying Power, against the defenseless Palestinian civilian population under its occupation in direct violation of international law, including humanitarian and human rights law. Since our last letter, on 21 October 2015 (A/ES-10/698-S/2015/807), and since the 22 October open debate of the Security Council, deaths and injuries among Palestinians have risen as a result of assaults by Israeli occupying forces and settlers. The casualties this month alone have reached 65 Palestinians killed, including 14 children, and more than 7,200 Palestinians, including hundreds of children, injured, with many eventually succumbing to their wounds. An estimated 2,220 Palestinians have been shot and injured by live ammunition and rubber-coated steel bullets routinely fired by occupying forces. Additionally, many victims have suffered burns,

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including 300 children, while others have been beaten and assaulted by occupying forces and settlers.

Thousands of Palestinians have also suffered the effects of tear gas inhalation and in some cases it has been fatal, as tragically happened with Hashem al-Azzeh (age 54), who died from inhalation of excessive tear gas fired by the Israeli occupying forces in Al-Khalil. We reject the indiscriminate and excessive use of force by Israel, the occupying Power, against the Palestinian civilian population, including the youth and elderly, and we reiterate our urgent appeal to the international community, including the Security Council, to take all necessary measures to provide the defenseless and occupied Palestinian civilian population with protection. This must be done in accordance with international humanitarian law, under which the occupied population is entitled to protection and under which the international community is obligated to ensure such protection where the occupying Power clearly refuses to uphold its legal obligations and is in constant grave breach of those obligations.

We must also draw attention to the fact that Palestinian civilians continue to be arrested and detained by Israeli occupying forces by the hundreds. This month alone, more than 1,300 Palestinians have been arrested and detained, often in violent and traumatizing raids, in the West Bank, including Occupied East Jerusalem. More than half of the arrests have been of Palestinian children under the age of 18, including a child as young as 11 years old, Malek Abu Maria, on 27 October. Thousands of Palestinians — men, women and children — are now being held captive in the occupation's jails under the most inhumane and abhorrent conditions, suffering physical and mental abuse, including torture. The international community must condemn this and it must demand that Israel, the occupying Power, cease such violations and abide by international law.

In this connection, we are compelled to emphasize that it is the legal right of the Palestinian people to politically and peacefully resist and reject this illegal occupation. Such rejection of the occupation cannot in any way be used as justification by the occupying Power to arrest and detain Palestinians or deem them so-called "terrorists", and these illegal practices should be roundly condemned. The international community must demand that Israel cease such illegal measures and comply with its international legal obligations and the relevant international norms.

The following are some of the many crimes perpetrated by the Israeli occupying forces and terrorist settlers against the Palestinian people in the recent period.

On 20 October 2015:

- Adi al-Masalmah (age 24) was shot with live bullets and killed in Beit Awwa, south-west of Al-Khalil. He was shot from a short distance in the head and in his legs
- Hamza al-Amleh (age 25) was shot dead by Israeli occupying forces near the illegal settlement of "Gush Etzion", south of Bethlehem
- Ahmed Sharif al-Sarhi (age 27) was killed by occupying forces north of Al-Bureij camp in Gaza
- Bashar al-Ja'bari (age 15) and Husam al-Ja'bari (age 17) were shot dead by Israeli occupying forces near the illegal settlement of "Kiryat Arba", east of Al-Khalil

- Mohammed Qahoush (age 16) was shot with live fire in the head by the Israeli occupying forces and was seriously injured in Ni'lin, west of Ramallah

On 21 October 2015:

- Hashem al-Azzeh (age 54) died as a result of excessive tear gas inhalation in Tal al-Rumeida, in the centre of Al-Khalil
- Mu'taz Attallah Qasem (age 22) was shot dead by occupying forces near the illegal settlement of "Adam", east of Ramallah
- Reports indicated that at least 883 Palestinians, including children, had been detained by the occupying forces across the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, since the start of October

On 22 October 2015:

- Mahmoud Khalil Ghnaimat (age 20) died from wounds sustained in an attack by Israeli occupying forces near the illegal settlement of "Beit Shamesh", south of Occupied Jerusalem
- Miqdad al-Heeh (age 21) was shot by Israeli occupying forces and critically injured near the illegal settlement of "Beit Shamesh", south of Occupied Jerusalem

On 23 October 2015:

- Mus'ab Mohamed Ghnaimat was shot and injured by occupying forces near the illegal settlement of "Gush Etzion", south of Bethlehem
- Yahya Karira (age 20) died of wounds sustained during an Israeli raid in Gaza the previous week
- Tabe' Khalil Taqatqah (age 42) was run over and injured by an Israeli terrorist settler near Taqou', south of Bethlehem

On 24 October 2015:

- Khalil Abu Obeid (age 25) died from wounds sustained in early October after being shot by Israeli occupying forces in Khan Younis, Gaza
- Ahmed Kamil (age 16) was shot dead by occupying forces near the illegal checkpoint of Al-Jalameh, north of Jenin

On 25 October 2015:

- Israeli occupying forces issued administrative detention orders against 27 Palestinians
- Terrorist settlers from the so-called "price tag" group set a Palestinian-owned car on fire and spray painted racist graffiti on walls in Um Tuba, southeast of Jerusalem
- Suleiman Ahmed (age 22), a Palestinian driver working at the Ministry of Health, was forced out of the car and thrown to the ground, before being brutally assaulted at gunpoint by Israeli occupying forces at the illegal checkpoint at Za'tara on Nablus-Ramallah road

- Azzam Shalaldeh (age 20) was shot by a terrorist settler while he was picking olives in Wadi Sa'ir north-east of Al-Khalil and suffered serious injuries to his neck, abdomen and foot

- Dania Irsheid, a 17-year-old girl, was shot dead by the Israeli occupying forces near the Ibrahimi Mosque in Al-Khalil

- The Israeli Prime Minister declared that the occupying Power was considering revoking the residency status of thousands of Palestinian residents of Occupied East Jerusalem

On 26 October 2015:

- Over the past 26 days, the Palestinian Ministry of Health has reported that at least 61 Palestinians have been killed by the Israeli occupying forces and terrorist settlers, including 14 children, a pregnant woman and a Palestinian political prisoner; 43 were killed in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, and 17 were killed in Gaza

- 2,120 Palestinians have been shot and injured by live ammunition, rubber-coated steel bullets and tear gas canisters routinely fired by the occupying forces at Palestinian civilians. In addition to such injuries, many have suffered burns while others have been beaten and assaulted by occupying forces and settlers. Among the wounded are 450 children and women, while more than 5,000 Palestinian civilians have suffered the effects of tear gas inhalation

- More than 1,000 Palestinians, including many children, have been arrested and detained since the beginning of October

- Raed Abdul-Rahim Jaradat (age 22) was shot dead by occupying forces north of Al-Khalil

- Saed Mohammed Yousef al-Atrash (age 19) was shot dead by occupying forces in the old city of Al-Khalil

- Terrorist settlers attacked Palestinian homes on the Nablus-Jenin road with gunfire and hurled stones and empty bottles at passing Palestinian vehicles

- Israeli occupying forces removed the surveillance cameras that had been installed by the Islamic Religious Endowments Authority (Al-Waqf) in the vicinity of Moroccan Gate, after groups of settlers, guarded by occupying forces, forced their way into the holy site through this gate

- Iyad Rawhi Jaradat (age 17) was killed by the Israeli occupying forces near Al-Khalil by being shot in the head with a live bullet

- Israeli settlers attacked Palestinian farmers harvesting olives in their land east of Nablus; they also attacked Haj Tawfiq (age 66) and moderately injured him

On 27 October 2015:

- Two Palestinians, Shabaan Abu Shkeidem (age 17) and Shadi Nabil Abdulmuti Dweik (age 22) were shot and killed by occupying forces near the illegal "Gush Etzion" settlement south of Bethlehem after allegedly stabbing an Israeli soldier

- Hammam Said (age 23) was shot and killed by Israeli occupying forces near Tal Rumeida in Al-Khalil

- Ibrahim Barad'iya (age 30), a mentally disabled man, was arrested by occupying forces near Al-Aroub, north of Al-Khalil

- Israeli occupying forces arrested Mohamed Abu Maria (age 17) and Mo'ayyad Abu Maria (age 15) after raiding their home, while their 11-year-old brother Malek was summoned for interrogation, arrested and transferred to the occupying Power's detention centre called "Ofer"

On 28 October 2015:

- Israeli occupying forces stormed Al-Maqased Hospital in Al-Tur in Occupied East Jerusalem for the second consecutive day with the aim of confiscating outpatient medical files, spreading fear and panic among patients and medical staff

- Islam Rafiq Ibeido (age 23) was shot by occupying forces and left to bleed to death near the illegal settlement of "Kiryat Ar ... Al-Khalil

- Israeli occupying forces issued notices for the confiscation of dozens of acres of Palestinian-owned land in six villages north of Nablus, including Beit Furik, Salem, Awarta, Yasuf, Sawiya and Azmout

On 29 October 2015:

- Mahdi Mohammad Ramadan al-Muhtasib (age 23) was shot dead by Israeli occupying forces near Al-Ibrahimi Mosque in Al-Khalil

- Farouk Abdel Qader Omar Sidr (age 19) was shot dead by occupying forces near the illegal "Beit Hadassah" settlement in Al-Khalil

In the light of these mounting civilian casualties, we reiterate our call to the international community to condemn and reject Israel's use of excessive and indiscriminate force against the Palestinian civilian population, which constitutes the official policy of the Israeli Government, as repeatedly declared by numerous Israeli officials, including the Prime Minister. This policy, which is rooted in the longstanding and blatant Israeli disregard for Palestinian life, has had a vastly detrimental effect on the Palestinian civilian population, increasing casualties and injuries, intensifying the oppression and fear experienced daily and deepening frustration and despair. As the international community remains unable to confront this crisis situation, the sense of isolation and abandonment by the Palestinian people is regrettably also increasing.

In this regard, we must also again draw the international community's attention to the ongoing rabid incitement by Israeli government officials that serves only to foment and excuse Israeli hatred of the Palestinian people and thus intensify the threats to the safety and well-being of Palestinians. The harm that is being inflicted on the Palestinian people at this moment, especially our youth, is abundant proof of the impact of such unbridled incitement and extreme and vulgar provocations by the occupying Power.

A few examples of such incitement in just the past week include the statement by the Israeli Prime Minister that "at this time we need to control all of the territory for the foreseeable future" and by the Israeli Deputy Foreign Minister that "my dream is to see the Israeli flag flying over the Temple Mount". Prime Minister Netanyahu took it even further when he attempted to rewrite history and absolve Hitler by falsely blaming the Holocaust, one of the most horrendous horrors in history, on a

Palestinian. The Prime Minister also has recently threatened the revocation of the residency permits of thousands of Palestinians in Occupied East Jerusalem, which would constitute yet another illegal measure of collective punishment. Such reckless, provocative statements fan already blazing tensions and further prove the malicious intentions of Israel towards the Palestinian people, their land and their holy sites, including in terms of respect for the historic status quo at Al-Haram al-Sharif.

All are aware that a single incident did not spark the current situation. For years, Israel has cultivated a culture of aggression and hate towards the Palestinian people under its illegal occupation. It has illegally and forcibly imposed control against the entire Palestinian population and persisted with the complete denial and gross violation of their human rights. All of this has been perpetrated with total impunity. It is undeniable that the Israeli occupation is the root cause of all that is occurring at this moment, and Israel's denial of this fact is offensive and must be rejected. The Israeli occupation, in all its forms and manifestations, be it aggression, colonization, provocations or incitement, is the root cause, not the symptoms that we are witnessing today, which are the inevitable by-products of such unrelenting oppression and brutality.

As this injustice continues unabated and innocent lives continue to be taken and ruined by the occupying Power, we must again call for immediate international action. We reiterate our appeal to the Security Council to uphold its Charter duties and to act to protect the Palestinian civilian population and compel an end to Israel's aggression and crimes. This is the only way to de-escalate the current dangerous situation and promote the calm necessary to revive the hope and potential for a peaceful solution that ends the Israeli occupation and allows the Palestinian people to live in freedom and dignity in their own State of Palestine, with East Jerusalem as its capital.

The present letter is in follow-up to our 561 previous letters regarding the ongoing crisis in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, which constitutes the territory of the State of Palestine. These letters, dated from 29 September 2000 (A/55/432-S/2000/921) to 21 October 2015 (A/ES-10/698-S/2015/807), constitute a basic record of the crimes being committed by Israel, the occupying Power, against the Palestinian people since September 2000. For all of these war crimes, acts of State terrorism and systematic human rights violations being committed against the Palestinian people, Israel, the occupying Power, must be held accountable and the perpetrators must be brought to justice.

I should be grateful if you would arrange to have the text of the present letter distributed as a document of the tenth emergency special session of the General Assembly, under agenda item 5, and of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Riyad **Mansour**
Ambassador
Permanent Observer
of the State of Palestine to the United Nations